

Denise Onen

Cape Town, ZA • (+27) 84-676-4218
deniseonen@icloud.com • [Portfolio](#) • [Website](#)

Sonic Cultural Practitioner

Personal Details:
26/12/1995 • Cape Town, ZA • South African

Onen's existence as a multicultural African, queer individual is rooted in serving as a sonic cultural practitioner, with a demonstrated history of contribution to collaborative sonic works across a variety of performance mediums. Onen has been dedicated to projects that have raised awareness, empowered local communities, and held space for marginalised bodies. Onen has since been nominated for the 2022 *International Oram Award* for feminine-bodied sound, music, and associated technology innovators.

Areas of Expertise

Sound Design
Technical Support

Audio Editing & Mixing
Artistic Research

Composition
Post-Production Support

Technical Proficiencies

Software: Canva * MS Office Suite
DAWS: Ableton Live * Audacity * Logic Pro * MainStage * Pro Tools * RX
Notation Software: Finale * MuseScore * Sibelius
Coding Languages: CSS * HTML * MaxMSP * Pure Data

Education

Master of Music in Musicology (by dissertation) | University of Cape Town, ZA (2023, In Progress)

Bachelor of Music in Music Technology (*Distinction - for Music Technology*) | University of Cape Town, Cape Town, ZA (2018), Final Year GPA: 70, Degree GPA: 66

- 2017 Chairperson of Music Students Council SACM
- 2016 - 2018 Student Representative on UCT Mental Health Task Team
- 2014 - 2015 Deputy Head Student of Glendower Residence UCT

AWARDS

Individual

Resident Artist, [Oscillations Project](#), Akademie der Künste AdK, Centre of Humanities Research CHR, Deutschlandfunk Kultur / Klangkunst DLFK, Cape Town x Berlin, 2023/24

Fellow, [DAAD Arts and Media Program](#)/ Berliner-Künstlerprogramm, Berlin, 2023

International Nominee for [Oram Award](#), Daphne Oram Trust, PRS Foundation, Radiophonic Institute, 2022
Virtual Alternate/ Shortlisted Candidate, OneBeat Virtual 3 (Online Collaborative Residency) – Found Sound Nation, 2022

Bursary Recipient for Music Technology, Southern African Music Rights Association (SAMRO), 2018

Project-Related

[Prayers for Sweet Water](#) – British Film Institute (2021)

- Nominated for **Best Short Film Jury Prize** at SUNDANCE International Film Festival, Utah, US
- Awarded **Best Southern African Short Documentary** at 2022 Durban International Film Festival, Durban, ZA
- Awarded **Emerging Black LGBTQ+ Filmmaker Award** at 2021 New Fest, New York, US
- Featured at Seattle International Film Festival, Utah, US

- Featured at BFI Flare LGBTQ+ Film Festival, London, UK
- Featured at Hamptons International Film Festival, New York, US

[Deliver Me](#) – In Collaboration with Paper Crane Collective (2021)

- Awarded **Best Southern African Short Documentary** African Human Rights Film Festival, Johannesburg, ZA
- Featured at Cairo International Film Festival, Egypt
- Featured at Encounters South African International Documentary Festival, Online

Artist features

Sound Collaborator, [The Revolution will not be Televised: It will be live-streamed](#) by Koleka Putuma, 2023

- World Expression Forum WEXFO, Lillehammer, Norway
- International Literature Festival BuchBasel, Switzerland

Sound Designer, [The Theatre of Beauty \(Imvuselelo\)](#) by Koleka Putuma, National Arts Festival, Makhanda, ZA, 2023

- *The Dancing Mushroom* dir. Haneem Christian - MIND Foundation's INSIGHT conference, Berlin, Germany

Performance Feature, [Bloom \(a gentle erosion\)](#) by Mia Thom (Exhibition), 2022

Dakar Biennale, Senegal

Featured Artist, [Surviving Solitude](#) (Immersive Sound Art Piece)

- ICA UnInfecting the City Public Arts Festival, Cape Town, South Africa, 2021
- So Creative Summit (Digital Storytelling Exhibition) – British Council

Sound Collaborator, [“Remnant Wading Space”](#) for *Our Bodies are Clocks Made of Water* by Blk Banaana (Exhibition), LAPA Residency, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2021

Performer, [Long-Exposure Photography: African Harp](#) – [Mind the Gap](#) (Notes on Black Holes)

by Mia Thom (Exhibition), 2019

MUSIC & SOUND EXPERIENCE

Sound Design/ Engineering Experience

Sound Designer, [Lemkus x Nike](#) – dir. Haneem Christian, Nike RSA (Advertisement), 2023

Sound Designer, *Still Connecting* – dir. Faye Kabali-Kagwa, Edinburgh Fringe Film Festival (Multimedia), 2023

Sound Designer, *All my Ex-Lovers are Dead* – Dara Beth (Stage Play), 2022, 2023

Sound Designer, [I AM](#) – dir. Haneem Christian, Sportscene RSA (Advertisement), 2022

Sound Designer, [Deliver Me](#) – dir. Jannous Aukema, Paper Crane Collective (Documentary), 2021

Sound Designer, *Prayers for Sweet Water* – British Film Institute CT (Short Film), 2021

Sound Designer, *Still Bloom* – Zoey Black Productions (Documentary), 2021

Soundscape Creation, [Bienvenue A Ma Table](#) – For Elijah Ndoumbe, Forecast Forum, (Multimedia Installation), 2020

Sound Editor, [Empatico Experience](#) – dir. Odendaal Esterhuyse, Empatico & UMUZI, (Documentary), 2019

Compositions

Composer [Usque ad Sidera Tellus](#) – Commissioned by Dr. John Woodland, Vox Cape Town, (Choral Work), 2023

Composer, [Lemkus x Nike](#) – dir. Haneem Christian, Nike RSA (Advertisement), 2023

Composer, *Delela* – Tiisetso Mashifane (Stage Play), National Arts Festival, Makhanda 2022, 2023

Composer [Siyamphimbili](#) – Commissioned by Dr. Pearl Shankuan, Calvin University, (Choral Work), 2022

Composer, [I AM](#) – Sportscene RSA (Advertisement), 2022

Composer, [Sithi Aba](#), - KAMVA Collective + Norval Foundation, (Short Film), 2022

Composer, *Prayers for Sweet Water* – British Film Institute CT (Short Film), 2021

Featured Composer, SA New Music Concert – Music Department of North-West University, 2021

Theme Composer, [Botho with RoxyMaRosa](#) – UCT TV/ CTV TV/ DSTV (Theme Composition), 2018

Mixing & Mastering Experience

- Mix & Mastering Engineer**, [Salon Kewpie - The Legacy Project](#) – dir. Haneem Christian, GALA Archive, District Six Museum (Short Documentary), 2023
- Mix Engineer**, *Still Connecting* – dir. Faye Kabali-Kagwa, Edinburgh Fringe Film Festival (Multimedia), 2023
- Mix Engineer**, [I AM](#) – Sportscene RSA (Advertisement), 2022
- Mix Engineer**, [SenseMaker](#) – ACDI, Western Cape Water Caucus, UCT (Documentary: Climate Change Initiative), 2022
- Mix Engineer**, [City Occupied](#) – Lionfish Productions (Documentary: Housing Crisis), 2022
- Mix Engineer**, [Decentralising Music Making in South Africa](#) – Stiff Pap/Umuzi, (Documentary) 2022
- Mix & Mastering Engineer**, [Deliver Me](#) – Paper Crane Collective (Documentary), 2021
- Mix & Mastering Engineer**, *Prayers for Sweet Water* – British Film Institute CT (Documentary), 2021
- Mix Engineer**, *A Faint Patch of Light* (Recorded Adaptation) – Stage Play at AfroVibes Festival, 2020

Conferences & Symposiums

- Presenter**, *Oscillations Workshop*, Centre of Humanities Research CHR, Greatmore Humanities Hub, Cape Town, 2023
- Attendee**, SASRIM - South African Society for Research in Music, CHR, UWC, Cape Town, ZA, 2023
- Contributing Artist & Presenter**, *Bowed Electrons* – Electroacoustic Music Festival & Symposium, 2022, 2023
South African College of Music – University of Cape Town, Cape Town, ZA
- Online Panelist**, *Panel 1: "Bodies in Virtual Spaces"* – *Network of Embodied Research in Africa*, 2022
Rhodes University Drama Department, Makhanda, ZA
- Contributing Artist**, *Bowed Electrons* – Music Festival & Symposium, 2021
South African College of Music – University of Cape Town, Cape Town, ZA
- Mentor & Participant**, [Dreaming Girls Music Conference](#) – Music Festival & Symposium, 2019
Rossetonville, Johannesburg, ZA

Work Experience

- Sound Mentor & Engineer**, [Brave Futures](#) Film Initiative, OTV, Cape Town, 2023
- Sound Engineer, Audio Restoration**, *The EAR Academy*, Online Music Education, Cape Town, 2021 - 2022
- Product Manager**, *RefRights* - 2017 UN Resolution Project Winning Initiative, 2017 - 2021
- Piano Teacher**, *Aubrey's Academy of Music*, Athlone, Cape Town, 2019 - 2020
- Marketing and Social Media**, *KimoraMed*, Landsdowne, Cape Town, 2019
- Music Technology Tutor & Mac Lab Assistant**, SACM, University of Cape Town, 2018

Performances

- Performer**, [Taking Root in the Flesh](#) – The Mutha_Ship Landing, 2021
- In collaboration with Dumama
- Performer**, [Pushing Portals](#) – The Mutha_Ship Landing, Found Sound Nation, 2021
- In collaboration with Dumama, Jannous Aukema, and Kamil Hassan

Publications

- Onen, L.L., Denise, "Siyaphambili – We Are Moving Forward", Hinshaw Music, 2022
Available at: <https://www.halleonard.com/product/1140075/siyaphambili-we-are-moving-forward>
- Onen, Denise, "Successfully Failing at Life" in Anthology: Den Store Slam!, Boka – littMELK, 2018
Available at: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/43402632-den-store-slam-boka>